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FROM: PARIS

TO: Secretary of State

NO: 1919, NOVEMBER 22, 11 PM

NIACT

SENT DEPARTMENT 1919 REPEATED INFORMATION BONN 157, LONDON 377, MOSCOW 89, BERLIN 29.

AMBASSADOR WHITNEY, WHO WAS IN PARIS NOVEMBER 22, HAS DISCUSSED BERLIN SITUATION WITH ME. FOLLOWING ARE OUR JOINT VIEWS:

1. WE HAVE NOTED GENERAL NORSTAD'S RECOMMENDATION (EMBTel 1911) SUPPORTING IDEA OF WESTERN INITIATIVE IN PROPOSING FOUR-POWER CONFERENCE ON GERMAN QUESTION IN IMMEDIATE FUTURE. WE AGREE THIS HAS MERIT AND URGE THAT IT BE GIVEN CAREFUL STUDY. WE ESPECIALLY SUPPORT GENERAL NORSTAD'S VIEW THAT WE SHOULD TAKE FORTHRIGHT STAND ON BERLIN QUESTION AND MAKE CLEAR OUR DETERMINATION TO REMAIN THERE.
2. FOUR-POWER CONFERENCE WOULD OFFER DEFINITE ADVANTAGES, AS WELL AS CERTAIN DISADVANTAGES. ON PLUS SIDE, PROPOSAL MIGHT SERVE (A) TO REGAIN MEASURE OF INITIATIVE FOR WEST; (B) TO CONFIRM ONCE AGAIN OUR ADHERENCE TO GENEVA 1955 AGREEMENT ON FOUR-POWER RESPONSIBILITY FOR GERMAN SETTLEMENT; (C) SECURE SUPPORT OF MANY SEGMENTS WESTERN PUBLIC OPINION AS DEMONSTRATION FLEXIBILITY AND WESTERN WILLINGNESS TO NEGOTIATE; (D) DIVERT PRESSURES FROM HIGHLY CHARGED BERLIN SITUATION TO A LARGER FRAME OF OVERALL GERMAN SETTLEMENT AND EUROPEAN SECURITY; (E) GIVE US BREATHING SPELL FOR DEVELOPMENT POSSIBLE OTHER SOLUTION. MOREOVER, CONFERENCE MIGHT ASSIST IN PREVENTING OURSELVES FROM BEING MANEUVERED INTO POSITION OF (A) APPEARING TO BE OPPOSED TO WITHDRAWAL

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-2- 1919, NOVEMBER 22, 11 PM, FROM PARIS

OF SOVIETS FROM EAST BERLIN, WHEN IN REALITY WE SHOULD BE HAPPY TO HAVE THEM WITHDRAW FROM ANY PLACE AT ANY TIME, AND (B) CHOOSING BETWEEN "SHOOTING" AND "RECOGNIZING". THESE ARE NOT INCONSIDERABLE ADVANTAGES, PARTICULARLY IF THEY WOULD HELP BOWSTER ALLIED SUPPORT FOR CONTINUED FIRM STAND IN BERLIN ITSELF DURING NEGOTIATIONS.

CONFERENCE, OF COURSE, SHOULD NOT BE VIEWED AS SUBSTITUTE FOR FIRMNESS, BUT AS COMPLEMENT TO STRONG POSITION ON ALLIED RIGHTS IN BERLIN.

3. ON OTHER HAND, THERE ARE QUESTIONS WHICH ARISE CONCERNING PROPOSAL FOR CONFERENCE WHICH DESERVE STUDY, AMONG WHICH ARE FOLLOWING: WOULD IT BE POSSIBLE IN FACT TO AVOID IMPLICATION THAT WESTERN PROPOSAL AT THIS TIME FOR CONFERENCE WAS MOVE OF WEAKNESS INTO WHICH WEST FORCED BY SOVIET PRESSURES? ALSO, IF SOVIETS AND WEST BOTH HOLD TO PRESENT POSITIONS, PROSPECTS ARE THAT CONFERENCE WOULD FAIL. SOVIETS MIGHT THEN GO AHEAD WITH PLANS TO TURN OVER RESPONSIBILITY TO GDR IN BERLIN, AND WEST'S POSITION WOULD NOT BE IMPROVED (ALTHOUGH NOT NECESSARILY IMPAIRED).

4. ESSENTIAL ELEMENT APPEARS TO BE ACHIEVEMENT, WITH GREATEST URGENCY, OF ALLIED UNITY ON COURSE OF ACTION. WE AGREE WITH AMBASSADOR THOMPSON (MOSCOW'S 186) THAT FIRST STEP SHOULD BE TO REACH AGREEMENT WITH BRITISH AND FRENCH THAT WE ARE PREPARED TO USE FORCE TO DEFEND BERLIN. AGREEMENT SHOULD DEFINED UNDER WHAT CIRCUMSTANCES FORCE IS TO BE USED AND TO WHAT EXTENT. WE SHOULD THEN INFORM SOVIETS, PROMPTLY AND CONFIDENTIALLY, OF OUR DECISIONS TO DEGREE DEEMED APPROPRIATE. SIMULTANEOUSLY, WE COULD CONSIDER FOUR-POWER CONFERENCE ON WHOLE GERMAN QUESTION.

5. WITH REGARD TO AMBASSADOR THOMPSON'S RECOMMENDATION  
THAT WE

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-3- 1919, NOVEMBER 22, 11 PM, FROM PARIS

THAT WE SHOULD BE PREPARED TO USE FORCE TO MAINTAIN  
ROAD COMMUNICATIONS AS WELL AS AIR, WE DOUBT THAT  
BRITISH AND FRENCH OPINION WOULD SUPPORT ARMED ALLIED  
ACTION TO FORCE ROAD ACCESS AS RESULT OF EFFORT BY GDR  
TO IMPOSE ACCEPTANCE OF GDR TRAVEL DOCUMENTATION.  
FURTHERMORE WHILE NOT MILITARY EXPERTS AND CONSEQUENTLY  
HESITANT TO HAZARD OPINION, WE DO UNDERSTAND MAINTENANCE  
SUCH ACCESS WOULD BE UNFEASIBLE WITHOUT EMPLOYMENT OF  
FORCE ON SUCH SCALE AS TO BE IMPRACTICABLE.

END TEXT

HOUGHTON

AAL/22

NOTE: Mr. Hillenbrand (GER) notified 9:30 p.m. 11/22/58 CWO-M

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